

## PANEL: Brown abruptly fired three former members

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plants.

The commission is the policy-making arm of the Department of Environmental Quality, which regulates a variety of pollutants.

The Republicans praised Brown's nominees — a scientist at Oregon State University, a tribal council member who has worked at DEQ, and a retired wood products executive.

"Our bone of contention is not with the three of them, but for the next 48 hours, with the governor," said Sen. Brian Boquist of Dallas.

"It is this notion of creating policy without regulatory or statutory authority. It is one of those constitutional clashes between the executive and legislative branches. I believe most of that will be resolved in the next day or two."

Although he voted no, Boquist said he expects he will vote for the nominees when their names come up for a vote by the full Senate for four-year terms.

Brown abruptly fired three commission members on March 29 and replaced them in what Boquist called

"unusual circumstances." She said she disputed their process, but not the result, of hiring Richard Whitman as permanent director of DEQ.

Such mass firings are rare, although Neil Goldschmidt requested and received resignations from all five members of the Oregon Transportation Commission upon becoming governor in 1987.

### No quid pro quo

All the replacement nominees told the committee their appointments were not contingent upon automatic support of the new plan, which would allow DEQ to regulate pollutants generated from several sources in the same area even if an individual's pollutants are considered at a safe level.

"If the governor appoints you, I certainly would listen to her input," said Robert "Wade" Mosby of Lake Oswego, the retired wood products executive. "It does not mean I would rule with what the governor says; that was never implied."

Mosby has worked for several companies, including the privately held forest products company now known simply as Roseburg, although it is based in

Springfield. He was a senior vice president for Collins, another company based in Portland.

"We recognize the desire that there needs to be a better path in Oregon for managing and regulating air toxics," said Kathleen George, a council member of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde and a former DEQ employee who worked with small communities for compliance. "The details of that have not been shared with us beyond an overview of the air quality program."

"The minute you talk about using a natural resource, it is automatically contentious," said Molly Kile, an associate professor at OSU's College of Public Health and Human Sciences, who specializes in how exposure to chemicals affect public health.

"It is important that you hear from different stakeholders involved," she added, especially those who are often unrepresented in these public debates.

Senate Republican Leader Ted Ferrioli of John Day responded: "I think the reticence of these members to comment without full

information gives me confidence that they understand the complexities of these issues."

### Tough job ahead

Brown appointed the advisory panel last year after public reaction to pollutants generated by two Portland eastside glassmakers — Bullseye Glass, which is now in compliance, and Uroboros Glass, which was sold in December and its production moved to Mexico — and by Precision Castparts at its plant in Southeast Portland.

The panel's plan also calls for the state to set health-based concentrations for 215 toxic air pollutants, up from the current 52. Formal rulemaking by the commission would start in a year.

Majority Democrats were largely silent. But Sen. Lee Beyer of Springfield, who sat on the Public Utility Commission from 2001 to 2010, had an observation for the nominees.

"As someone who spent a decade as a regulator, I know what you are getting into," he said. "I can guarantee that people will not be happy with your decisions from one side or the other."



Staff photo by Kathy Aney  
**Frank Harkenrider (right) stands with Hermiston Mayor David Drotzman at the official groundbreaking of the Harkenrider Center on Wednesday.**

## SENIORS: Arrived in limousine

Continued from 1A

of the senior center board, a 50-year lease of the site from Hermiston School District, a \$2 million Community Development Block Grant from the federal government and \$750,000 from the city of Hermiston.

Frank Harkenrider, whose name the center will bear, was front and center at the proceedings, pumping his fist and yelling "Yay!" when he reached the row of ceremonial golden shovels lined up for a photo op.

Drotzman said the city felt it appropriate to name the center after Harkenrider in recognition of the 50 years of time he put in as a Hermiston city councilor and mayor.

"That's 50 years of public service to the community," he said.

The building will include a large gathering space, two breakout rooms, office, restrooms, a kitchen, balcony, elevator and unfinished basement. A landscaped parking area will stretch across where Ridgeway Avenue curves into Northeast Second Street and into the current parking lot behind Hermiston Public Library.

To celebrate the occasion the senior center board arrived via limousine. Board member Virginia Beebe said she arranged the treat as a

surprise for the group after the hard work they have put in on the project.

Beebe said right now her biggest hope for the new senior center is for the city to "build it as fast as they can."

The building isn't expected to be ready until late 2017 or early 2018, she said, but the seniors will have to leave their current building in May to make way for the school district's demolition of the buildings on the fairgrounds.

In the interim, Our Lady of Angels Catholic Parish at 565 W. Hermiston Ave. has offered up space for the senior center to continue to serve meals to seniors starting May 16.

"It's a different kitchen, but it's a doable kitchen," Beebe said.

Karen Blair, the senior center's cook, said the site of the Harkenrider Center is the former site of Armand Larive Middle School, where she attended seventh and eighth grade.

"It's kind of full circle," she said. "It's just kind of crazy, so much has changed. But this is home, and to help out with the seniors, it's a blessing for me."

Contact Jade McDowell at [jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com](mailto:jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com) or 541-564-4536.

## Trump team vows pressure on NKorea

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration told lawmakers Wednesday it will apply economic and diplomatic pressure on North Korea to dismantle its nuclear weapons program, as an extraordinary White House briefing served to tamp down talk of military action against an unpredictable and increasingly dangerous U.S. adversary.

President Donald Trump welcomed Republican and Democratic senators before his secretary of state, defense secretary, top general and national intelligence director conducted a classified briefing. The same team was also meeting with House members in the Capitol to outline the North's escalating nuclear capabilities and U.S. response options to what they called an "urgent national security threat."

After weeks of unusually blunt military threats, the joint statement by the agency chiefs said Trump's approach "aims to pressure North Korea into dismantling its nuclear, ballistic missile and proliferation programs by tightening economic sanctions and pursuing diplomatic measures with our allies and regional partners." It made no specific mention of military options, though it said the U.S. would defend itself and friends.

The unprecedented meeting in a building adjacent to the White House reflected the increased American alarm over North Korea's progress in developing a nuclear-tipped missile that could strike the U.S. mainland. A flurry of military activity, by North Korea and the U.S., and its partners on and around the divided Korean Peninsula, has added to the world's sense of alert.

While tensions have increased since Trump took office, they've escalated dramatically in recent weeks as American and other intelligence agencies suggested the North was readying for a possible nuclear test. Although such an explosion hasn't yet occurred, Trump has sent high-powered U.S. military vessels and an aircraft carrier to the region in a show of force, while the North conducted large-scale, live-fire artillery drills, witnessed by national leader Kim Jong Un, earlier this week.

On Wednesday, South Korea started installing key parts of a contentious U.S. missile defense system that also has sparked Chinese and Russian concerns.

America's Pacific forces commander, Adm. Harry Harris Jr., told Congress on Wednesday the system would be operational within days. He said any North Korean missile fired at U.S. forces would be destroyed.

"If it flies, it will die," Harris said.

The Trump administra-



Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service via AP

**This photo distributed on Wednesday by the North Korean government, shows what was said to be a "Combined Fire Demonstration" held to celebrate the 85th anniversary of the North Korean army.**

tion has said all options, including a military strike, are on the table. But the administration's statement after briefing senators — all 100 members were invited — outlined a similar approach to the Obama administration's focus on pressuring Pyongyang to return to long-stalled denuclearization talks. Trump's top national security advisers said they were "open to negotiations" with the North, though they gave no indication of when or under what circumstances.

The strategy hinges greatly on the cooperation of China.

"China is the key to this," said Sen. John McCain, who got a preview of Trump's message at a dinner with the president this week.

Among the options are returning North Korea to the U.S. state sponsor of terrorism blacklist, which Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said last week was under consideration.

His spokesman, Mark Toner, said Wednesday that another tactic is getting nations around the world to close down North Korean embassies and consulates, or suspending them from international organizations.

But sanctions will be the greatest tool at the Trump administration's disposal. Tillerson is chairing a U.N. Security Council meeting Friday designed to get nations to enforce existing penalties on North Korea and weigh new ones.

Testifying before the House Armed Services Committee, Harris said

he expects North Korea to soon be able to develop a long-range missile capable of striking the United States, as Kim has promised. "One of these days soon, he will succeed," Harris said.

North Korea's U.N. mission said the nation would react to "a total war" with Washington by using nuclear weapons. It vowed victory in a "death-defying struggle against the U.S. imperialists."

Trump, like presidents before him, faces difficult options. Sanctions haven't forced Pyongyang to abandon its nuclear efforts, but a targeted U.S. attack to take out its weapons program risks a wider war along a heavily militarized border near where tens of millions of South Koreans live. The threat would extend to nearby Japan, another country North Korea regularly threatens.

China has urged restraint by both Pyongyang and Washington. Foreign Minister Wang Yi said North Korea must suspend its nuclear activities, but "on the other side, the large-scale military maneuvers in Korean waters should be halted."

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